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12 February 2004

REPLY TO
ATTN. OF: WILLIAM MILLER

SUBJECT: Draft Non-Metropolitan Local Official Consultation Process

TO: Jeff Ottesen, Director
Division of Program Development
State of Alaska
DOT&PF
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, AK 99801-7898


Dear Director Ottesen;

After a review of the above noted draft, we have the following comments and questions:

1. We note that the draft reflects that DOT&FP will notify and consult with elected or appointed local officials with transportation responsibility in each City and Borough. Our question is why Tribal Officials are not included in notification. A number of roads have been constructed within the immediate area of Tribes, some of which have been paid for by the State of Alaska and/or the Federal Government, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Indian Roads Program. We feel that we should be consulted with in instances where road or road improvements are being planned for our area.
2. There are times that projects have been planned and constructed with little or no notification to local Tribes. Some of these projects could have resulted in savings if the Tribe had been informed. With prior information, Tribes would have the opportunity to plan their local road programs in coordination with state projects and save funding. For example, if we need upgrading of local village roads, which we have accepted maintenance responsibility for, we may be able to plan the upgrading in conjunction with a State road project in the area, thereby allowing for improved local road safety, at minimum cost.
3. Tribes have, for a number of years, been applying for and receiving both State and Federal funds for roads and road improvements. We feel that it would be beneficial to both the State and the Tribes if they were included in the consultation process.

If additional information is required, please contact me at the above address or phone number

Sincerely yours


William J. Miller
President

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